PART TWO

KASHMIR MISGOVERNMENT

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ECONOMIC
AND
POLITICAL OPPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE OF KASHMIR
BY THE MAHARAJA'S GOVERNMENT

BY

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There is only one question to be asked and answered, with regard to the work, and that is, "Are the statements herein contained concerning the Jammo Government true or untrue ?" And there is only one method by which that question can be answered, namely, by the course which I have myself pursued of strict and labourious investigation in Cashmere itself.

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I

Owing to that peculiar arrangement between the Government of India and the Jammu Government, by which Englishmen are excluded from the dominions of the latter during the winter months, and also to the well-grounded fear of the Maharajah's subjects to speak of the oppressive system under which they live, I feel confident that most of the following information, which I have, not without difficulty, collected, will be new, alike to those who have travelled in Cashmere, and to those whose knowledge of the country and its government is only derived from newspapers and the talk of society.

I am therefore inclined to believe that the communications I have to make regarding a country for whose welfare (as I shall endeavour to show) we are responsible, will be of interest, first to those who wish that the Government they serve or live under, should act with less regard to the expediency of the moment than in such a manner as shall procure for it the character of a high-minded, an unselfish, and a just power.

Second, to those who can feel pity for the undeserved sufferings of men, and disgust and indignation at the spectacle of a people whose characteristics (both intellectual and moral) give evidence of former greatness, trampled upon by a race in every way inferior to themselves, and steadily deteriorating under the influence of an oppressive despotism which bars the way to all improvement, whether social, intellectual, or religious.

Third, to those who, from their position, share in the responsibility which in my opinion, attaches to the Govt. of India regarding the people whom it sold into the slavery of Gulab Singh.

Without further promise or apology, I shall therefore begin by laying before the reader a detailed account of the oppression of the people by the government cf Maharaja.

II

Of almost everything produced by the soil, Government takes a large proportion, and the numerous officials who are employed in collecting it are paid by an award of so much grain from the share of the zemindars.

The following is a list of the different officials who are concerned in the collection and division of the land produce, and in the general government of the country outside the city of Shrinagar, which is under the Governor of Cashmere and the Chief Magistrate.

The Principal of these are :

The Tehsildar :—He has under him from two to five pergunnahs; he exercises a supervision over the accounts of the 'Kardars' within his district; he has powers of punishment up to a fortnight's imprisonment and ten rupees fine; all complaints, disputes and offences occurring within his Tehsil are referred to him; he has from 200 to 400 sepoys under him, and is responsible only to the Dihwan or Governor of Cashmere who resides in the city.

The Thanedar :—He is the Chief officer over each pergunnah; he has slighter powers of punishment, and from 40 to 50 sepoys under him. His chief duties are to make inspections throughout his pergunah, and to make reports concerning the crops and general matters to his Tehsildar.

The Kardar :—He is the chief of the officials who are personally concerned in the collection of the land produce. He has under him a certain number of villages, of whose crops he has to keep a strict account, and to each of which he goes in person at the time when the different crops ripen, in order to superintend the different distribution of each. He reports to his Thanedar, and causes the Government shares of the crops to be despatched to the city, or elsewhere, according to the orders he may receive. In lieu of some of the inferior kinds of grain, the Government will occasionally take an equivalent in money from the Kardar.

The Zemindars do not however, benefit by this arrangement, since in these cases the Kardar takes from them the full amount of produce, and sells the amount, for which the Government have taken money, to his own advantage; and since this arrangement is greatly preferred by the Kardars, there must be a large demand for these grains among the people; since, in order to make their own profits they are, of course, obliged to sell them at a higher rate than the very high prices demanded by Government, a scale of which I shall give in the sequel.

Over each village there is a Mokuddum, whose duty is to report any irregularities or thefts, to collect coolies and carriage for Government or others, and to keep an account of the crops of his village in conjunction with another official called the Patwaree.

Patwaree :—His special duty is to keep a separate account with each house of the zemindars of his village of the different crops belonging to it. To each village there is a Patwaree; he is paid by the zemindars, and is a necessary expense entailed on the zemindars by the mode of collecting their tax. He is usually a Pundit*.

The Shugdur :—There are from one to four 'Shugdurs' in each village, according to its size. Their duties are to watch the crops while in the ground, and the Government shares of the same, after they have set aside and are waiting their removal to the Government store-houses. It is said to be a common instance of oppression for the Shugdur to extort money from the zemindar by threatening to accuse him of stealing the Government grain; in which case, rather than court an investigation whose justice he has every reason to doubt, the zemindar is fain to purchase the silence of his oppressor according to ability. The Shugdur is also paid by the zemindars, and is supplied by them with 'russud' gratis.

The Surgowl :—He is the official who is over the Shugdurs. There is one Surgowl to about every ten villages; his duties are to inspect the Shugdurs and to report to his Kardar. It is said that he commonly extorts money from the Shugdurs, in the same

* It is, I suppose, known that the zemindars of Cashmere are Mussulmen, as are also the inhabitants of the cities, with the exception of a few Pundits and other officials of Government.

way as we have seen that the Shugdurs retaliate on the zemindar; none of these who are thus oppressed ever seem to contemplate such a step as that of complaining to the Thanedar of their pergunnah, or the Tehsildar of the district, a curious proof of the estimation in which the justice of these officials, one of whose nominal duties is to receive complaints, is held. They are, of course, Hindoos.

The Surgowl is frequently a Pundit, and is paid by the zemindars, as is also the Tarougdar.

Tarougdar, :—His duty is to weigh the grain when the Government portion is taken from the zemindars. He is always in attendance upon the Kardar.

The Hurkara :—He is a police constable. There is one Hurkara's house to about every twenty villages, all the male members of his family being also Hurkaras. He receives reports from and gives direction to the Doom.

Doom, or policeman, of which there is one to every village, the inhabitants of which are obliged to supply him with 'ressud'*

Such is the small official family which the Cashmere zemindar has to support, the greater part of whom are rendered necessary by the complicated system which a collection of land produce entails. According to the custom of the country, the land owned by any one house is common; † the Patwaree of the village has therefore to keep an account of the amount of grain produced by each different kind of crop belonging to each separate house and to calculate the amount due to Government according to the scale which I shall now proceed to give.

There are two kinds of crops in Cashmere, as in Hindustan, called the rubbia and the khareefa.

The first of these consists of those which ripen about July, and the second of those whose harvest time is about 2 months later. Of the Khareefa, all the crops except the rice are second crops, i.e. are produced from land which has already yielded a crop. The rice ground alone produces nothing but rice; it is

* Russud means daily subsistence including fuel. In the larger villages the Shugdur is usually a pundit.

† There are usually from two to five families in a house connected by marriage.

sown in May and reaped in September. The Government scale of weights used in collecting their proportion of grain is as follows :—

6 seers : 1 trak
16 traks : 1 kharwar,

but in selling the grain afterwards to the people the scale is

6 seers : 1 trak
15 traks : 1 kharwar.

The extra trak thus gained by the Government in each kharwar is in order to liquidate the expense of carrying the grain from the villages to city, which, considering the easy rate at which carriage is paid for by the Government, it must amply do.

The amount taken by the Government and the Government officials upon the rubbia and khareefa crops is as follow :—

Out of every 32 traks of each grain of the rubbia crop, the following amounts are taken from the zemindars :—

	Traks	seers
Government share	20	0
The Surgowl	0	1½
The Shugdur	0	1
The Tarougder	0	3/4
The Hurkara	0	1½
The Patwaree	0	1½
Servant of kardar	0	½
Total taken in kind out of every 32 traks of each grain of the rubbia crop.	20	6¾

The rubbia crop oonsists of the undermentioned grains, and the sums annexed to each are a money tax levied on every 32 traks of each grain of the rubbia crop, in addition to the tax in kind which I have just detailed :—

A Chilkee anna=about a Company's anna.

Kunnck (a kind of wheat)	3	Chilkee	annas
Uiska (barley)	1	,,	,,
Kurrer (peas)	1	,,	,,
Tilogogole (a grain from which oil is made)	3	,,	,,
Kuttan ,, ,, ,, ,,	3	,,	,,

		Chilkee annas	
Marharl	from which dal is made	3 ,,	,,
Mong	,, ,, ,, ,,	3 ,,	,,
Mosour	,, ,, ,, ,,	1 ,,	,,
Krotur	,, ,, ,, ,,	1 ,,	,,
Mout	a grain used for cattle, and also by the poorer classes of the people for food	1 ,,	

Total taken in money upon every 192 traks of the rubbia crop. ......20 Chilkee annas

Out of every 32 traks of each grain of the Khareefa crop the following amounts are taken from the zemindars :—

	Traks	Seers
Government share	21	2
Mundeer (or temple) tax	0	2
Jullos-us-gowl (said to be for the use of the Maharajah's guests)	0	2
The Patwaree	0	1
The Hurkara	0	1
The Shaugdar	0	1
The Surgowl	0	1
Servants of the Kardar	0	3/4
The Tarougdar	0	1
Total taken in kind out of every 32 traks of each grain of the Khareefa crop.	21	11¾

The Khareefa crop consists of the following grains, and the sums annexed to each are a money tax levied on every 32 traks of each grain of the khareefa crop, in addition to the tax in kind which I have just detailed :-

A Chilkee anna=about a Company's anna.

Shallee (rice in the husk)	2¾	Chilkee	annas
Mukki (Indian corn)	2¾	,,	,,
Trombu [a grain used entensively for food by the zemindars]	2¾	,,	,,
Shawul (grains nsed for food by the people)	2¾	,,	,,
Kupas (flax)*	4	,,	,,

Total taken in money out of every 142 traks

* The proportion taken in kind upon kupas or flax is in accordance with the scale laid down for the rubbia crop.

of the Khareefa crop.........15 Chilkee annas

Russudart :--In addition to these money taxes upon the different grain of the rubbia and Khareefa crops, there is also a tax called 'russudert', which is levied annually upon each house throughout the villages, of from 4 annas to 20 annas, according to the number of inmates.

Fruit Tax :--Of the more valuable kinds of fruits, such as walnuts, apples, pears, apricots, almonds, and quinces, three-forths of the annual produce are taken by Government. The duty of preserving them for this purpose falls upon the Surgowl and his Shugdurs; the above proportion is collected by the Kardar and his assistants, and transmitted according to the orders of Government.

Animal Tax :-Sheep and goats. From every village or villages whose land produces 500 Kharwars of grain, two or three of these animals are taken annually, and half their value returned in coin to the zemindars.

Ponies :--One pony is taken every year under the same conditions, half of his value being returned to the zemindars.

Puttoo :--One loie. or woven blanket, is taken annually under similar conditions, half of its value is returned.

Ghee :--For each milch cow half a seer of ghee annually is taken.

Fowls :--From one to ten fowls yearly from each house, according to the number of inmates.

Honey :—In the honey districts, as the Lidur and Wadwan valleys, two-third of the produce are taken yearly by the Kardar and others, but I am uncertain whether this is an authorised Government tax.

The accounts of all these taxes are kept by the Patwaree and Mokuddum, and the distribution of returned money is made by them.

The above are the taxes levied upon the zemindars of Cashmere—i.e. upon the population of the country, exclusive of those who live in the larger towns, ns ch as Srinagar, Islamabad, Sopore, and Pampur; and it should be borne in mind that all those taxes,* including the amounts both in money and in

* Except the honey, regarding which I have no certain knowledge.

kind, taken upon the rubbia and khareefa crops, are the regularly authorised Government taxes, and not exactions made by officials. It is highly probable that exactions are made in excess of the legal amounts herein laid down, but of this it is not possible to speak with perfect certainty.* Of the evils of the above system, (independently of the enormous percentage of produce taken by the Government), it is not necessary to say much, since they are tolerably apparent.

For instance, if a zemindar wishes to complain that he has been mulcted of a larger proportion of grain or money than he ought to have paid in accordance with the above complicated scale, he goes to the Thanedar of his pergunnah, who makes enquiries, and sends for the Kardar and the Patwaree. If the man's complaint is just, and if the Thanedar has not been bribed by the Kardar, he gets redress on payment of a rupee or two, besides the loss of his time. If the Thanedar has been bribed, the zemindar can appeal to the higher tribunal of the Tehsildar; but here again there is the risk of his being forestalled by the united bribes of both Kardar and Thanedar, so that usually the zemindar finds it a wiser course to pocket his money in silence.

The chief way, however in which the evils of the system are felt throughout the country, is in the prevention of all trade and barter between the people of the towns and the people of the villages. The later (except a few shawl-bafs who may be located in some of the villages) are all zemindars, the former are chiefly shop-keepers, shawl merchants, karkander shawl-bafs, sada-bafs, boatmen, and artisans of all description.† Thus, the people of the towns and the people of the country constitute two large classes, with different wants, the former require the things that the zemindar possesses—rice, corn, fowls, sheep, milk etc.; and the latter requires money, which the city people would willingly give him for his produce, to buy those comforts and

* I mean that, supposing no bribes are taken, no oppression practised by any of the numerous officials whom I have named as connected with the collections and division of the land produce, the zemindar will pay what is here laid down and on the hypothesis that all these officials are perfectly honest, he will pay no more: of the value of this hypothesis my readers may form their own opinions.

† Workers in leather, papier-mache, wood, metal, &c.

luxuries which the city can supply, chiefly imported articles, as spices, cotton, cloth etc. But this natural system of exchange is entirely prohibited by the above arrangement; so that, as I have been informed by the best English authority, there were people in Srinagar, some two or three years ago, with money in their pockets, in a state of semi-starvation. The zemindars had, of course, no surplus supplies to sell them, and the Government kotas* were shut for the time.

In fact, it is only very recently that regulations have been made whereby the people are permitted to buy as much grain as they require from the Government, and for this poor boon they are exceedingly thankful.

At some of their spring melas this year, I was struck with the increased number of people as compared with the year before, and, on enquiry, was told that this year they have been allowed to buy food enough to eat, and are consequently able to come out and enjoy themselves a little. Such is the boon which a paternal Government has rccently accorded to the Cashmeeries—permission to buy their own rice at a very exorbitant rate; and (poor wretches) so accustomed are they to oppression and misusage of all kinds, that they look upon this as a concession deserving of the utmost gratitude.

It has been truly said that the present system of land produce taxation is no new one introduced by the present dynasty, but had its origin at some remote period. There is, however, an important point of difference, which to the people makes all the difference between mild system and an oppressive one, and this is in the price of the grain sold by the Government.

Now, when Gulab Singh began his iniquitous reign, he found the system pretty much the same as I have described, with certain important exceptions and the prices of the grain thus collected in the Government kotas were as follows :—

A Hurree Singhi rupee = 8 annas.

Shallee (unground rice) 1 H. S. rupee per Kh.

* The kota is Government Store-house, from whence grain is sold to the people at prices which I shall give a list of in the sequel. Until very recently it was the custom to close these kotas from time to time, and never to sell rice but in very small quantities.

Uiska (barely)	1	-do-	-do-
Mukki (India corn)	1	-do-	-do-
Oil	1	-do-	-do-

and the remainder in proportion.

When the change in the coinage was made by Gulab Singh of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, he also raised the prices of everything sold by the Government to a rate higher than the present one, to which they were lowered on the accession of the present Maharaja. The prices at the present time are as under :-

A Chilki Rupee = 10 annas

Shallee	2 Ch.	Rs.	per	Kharwar.
Uiska	2	,,	,,	,,
Kunnck	5	,,	,,	,,
Mukki	2	,,	,,	,,
Muttur (peas)	4	,,	,,	,,
Mong (from which dal is made)	7	,,	,,	,,
Mohar	7	,,	,,	,,
Mosor	4	,,	,,	,,
Krotur	2	,,	,,	,,
Kuttun (from which oil is made)	6	,,	,,	,,
Mout (a grain used chiefly for cattle)	2	,,	,,	,,
Tilogogolo (from which oil is made)	8	,,	,,	,,
Tromba (for food)	2	,,	,,	,,
Pingi, Shawul] (grains used for food by the people.	2	,,	,,	,,
Kupas (flax)	16	,,	,,	,,

These prices, it will be seen, are more than double those for which the same things were sold when Ghulab Singh got the country. And, moreover, it can scarcely be pleaded on behalf of a bad system, that it has been a long time in operation.

The Government Kotas are both store-houses for the grain and also the places where it is sold to the people in small quantities.

Anyone in want of a large amount must go to the officer in charge of the Kotas, who give them an order upon some one of the Kardars, for which the officer takes the payment and places it to the credit of the Kardar in his accounts. There is a considerable loss in buying from the Government Kotas, from the

amount of dirt accumulated by transit from the village &c., so that the purchaser does not in point of fact, obtain a kharwar of shallee for his two chilkee rupees, but about a trak less. It will be remembered that the Government Kharwar, when they sell to the people, is only 15 traks.

The chief points, then, with regard to this system of taxation are :-

1. The prevention of that traffic, and consequent intercourse and union between the city and the country people, which are manifestly essential to their comfort and well-being.

2. The comparative poverty which it produces among the zemindars and the actual want and misery which it helps to produce among the shawl and sada-bafs, of whom I shall speak hereafter.

3. The opportunities afforded to Government and Government officials, of creating temporary famines by closing the kotas* and thus raising the prices of grain.

4. The countless opportunitites for chicanery and oppression which it affords to the numerous local officers employed in carrying out its most complicated arrangements.

In consequence of the want of intercourse and traffic between the city and country people which this system produces there has grown up a feeling of distrust and jealousy between them, most detrimental, of course, to the happiness and well-being of the community, but which it is probable that a mean and selfish Government like that of Jammu would rather foster than diminish.

By way of final comment upon this extraordinary system, I shall translate as sort of fable commonly known throughout Cashmere, which they have either invented, or perhaps adopted from the Persian, as emblimatical of the condition of their country, and the peculiar system of its Government :-

The Story of 'Mos Deen Khan'

"Once upon a time there was a very great nobleman, who was a Pathan, and who lived in the mountains to the north-west of

* I do not know that prices have been actually raised by the closing of the kotas, but it is certain that the people have often suffered great misery on account of it.

Cashmere; his name was Mos Deen Khan. One day he went upon a journey to Srinagar, in Cashmere, in order to pay his respects to the king of that country, and it happened that on that occasion he rode a horse for which he had a very great regard. He was indeed so fond of this horse, that he used to call himself 'the father of the animal.' "*

"When Mos Deen Khan reached Saf-o-Kuddel, which is the seventh bridge over the Jhelum at Srinagar, he alighted from his steed that he might proceed to the royal palace on foot; and having given many instructions to the groom with regard to the well-treatment of the horse, as well as especial orders on no account to ride him, he sent him back to his abode in the mountains".

"But when Mos Deen Khan got half-way to the palace of the king, he bethought himself that perhaps his servant might ill-treat his horse; he therefore sent another of his attendant with orders to overtake them, and ascertain whether the beloved animal was well cared for. The menial departed, and found the first servant riding the horse; he thought 'it is better for me to ride at my ease than to quarrel with this servant, who may perhaps afterwards falsely accuse me to my master,' so he too mounted".

"Now when Mos Deen Khan got very near the palace of the King, he again bethought himself that perhaps it would be better to send a still more trustworthy servant to be a check upon the conduct of the others with regard to his horse. But when the third servant overtook the party, and found his two predecessors riding, he also mounted, and the horse, which could have carried one, became so exhausted under the weight of three, that, on reaching his stable, he died."

The application of the story is obvious enough and is a good illustration of the natural wit of the Cashmeeries. It is particularly applicable at the present time, since the Maharajah himself is said to be in ignorance of large part of the oppression of his Government, and of the injustice of his irresponsible officials.

Nevertheless, such ignorance is equivalent to guilt; and the desire for the happiness of his subjects, if such a feeling be known

* The meaning of this expression will appear in the sequel of the story.

to the Maharajah, must be feeble and worthless indeed since it cannot even rouse him to ascertain for himself the condition of the people from whom he derives his wealth, and for whose well or ill-being he is responsible.

It is rarely, even, that he takes the trouble to visit the Cashmere valley; he sits apart in his luxurious palace at Jamoo, contented to receive such reports of the state of his country as his officials may choose to furnish him with.

From time to time some of the numerous complaints of his baneful administration, which circulate in newspapers and in the talk of society, must penetrate the seclusion of the royal chambers. He hears them apparently unmoved with indifference or contempt, and never seems to have conceived the idea of investigating their truth or falsehood for himself; or of seeing with his own eyes, and hearing with his own ears the actual condition of his people. He trusts everything to his Diwans and Wizeers, who are Hindoos of a different caste from his own, are ill-educated, totally ignorant of English forms of Government and of English ideas of justice.

There is not only no link between the governing class in Cashmere and the native inhabitants of the country, but there are all those deep-rooted antipathies which must exist between Mussulmans and Hindoos. Those who know the feeling that exists between the two races, do not require to be told that a country whose population is entirely composed of followers of one creed* and whose governing power is entirely composed of adherents of the other, must be oppressively and unjustly ruled.

That Mussulman and Hindoo to a certain extent amalgamate in Hindoostan, is no evidence to the contrary. They have the common feeling of dislike to the English; and moreover, the Mussulman of India has lost almost all the distinguishing characteristics of his race and religion. None of the noble qualities which once animated the followers of that creed in so many quarters of the globe are to be found, in the semi-Hindoo-ized, and consequent debased, Mussulman of India.

The people of Cashmere, however, (as I hope to show in a future work), are possessed of many characteristics, both intellectual and moral, which command our respect and admiration

* The proportion of pundits is too small to be taken into consideration.

and amongst them, the religion of Mohomet, ...
.................................., is still kept up with much of its ancient purity, and with devotion and enthusiasm that would not have disgraced the best days of Islamism.

III

The 'Poshm' which reaches Cashmere by the ordinary traders is bought up in its raw state and spun into thread of different degrees of fineness by women, the wives of shawl and sada-bafs, merchants, and even of shop-keepers and others who are unconnected with the shawl trade.* They sell it in small quantities to shop-keepers† in the bazaar, from whom it is bought by the karanders and others.

In order to understand the shawl system in Cashmere, it will be necessary to consider separately that of those which are worked by the loom, and those which are worked by the hand since the classes of people employed in each, and the Government regulations affecting them, are essentially different.

We will first examine:

The Loom System :- A karkander is a shawl manfacturer who employs under him a number of shawl-bafs—from 20 or 30 to 300. He buys the spun thread from the pooiwunee, and gets it dyed of different colours before it is distributed among his workmen. There are about 100 karkanders in Cashmere, small and great, all of whom live either in Srinagar or Islamabad; but the houses in which these shawl-bafs‡ work are in different parts of the valley, the largest number being in the towns of Pampur and Sopore. A number of overseers are, therefore, necessary to super-

* It seems to be considered a necessary branch of the education of the fair sex in Cashmere, and to be a very ancient institution among them.

† The Cashmeree name for these people is 'pooiwunee'.

‡ Shawl-bafs, or shagirds, are loom workmen. Sada-bafs those who manufacture the plain pushmina by the hand, with the assistance of a small frame. Refogars work the pattern upon the plain pushmina by the hand.

intend the work, to be responsible for the pushmina, and to draw the pay of the workman &c. These people are called *Ustad*, (a work, which signifies master or, sometimes, teacher); there is usually one over every 25 or 30 shawl-bafs. At the end of each month, the *Ustad* takes to the karkander an account of the work performed in that time by each of the men under him, and draws so much pay for each, which is regulated by the amount of work done. The sum thus realised by the shawl-bafs usually amount to from three to five chilkee rupees a month, inclusive of the amount deducted by the Government for rice, which is sold to the shawl-bafs under conditions which I shall explain presently. Such a sum is not sufficient to support a family with any approach to comfort, even in so fertile a country as Cashmere.*

The inability of the karkander to pay his workmen a higher rate of wages, I shall now proceed to demonstrate.

The annual tax levied on each karkander up to the Ist December 1867, was Rs. 47-8 (chilkee rupees) for each shawl-baf in his employ; from that date a reduction was made of 11 chilkee rupees. The method of raising this tax is somewhat complicated, and most liable to abuse.

There is in Srinagar a large Government office, called the Dagshali, in which are employed about 200 Pundits for purposes which I shall explain. At their head is an official commonly called the Darogha of the Daghshali. Before a loom-shawl can be legally made, a small piece of the intended degree of fineness must be brought to the Daghshali. The proposed size is named, and the price is thus calculated, the piece then receives the Government stamp, and is laid up in the Daghshali. The karkander receives a paper describing the shawl and giving the date of the stamp, for which he pays at the time Rs. 18-12 per cent on the price of the shawl. When the shawl is nearly completed, it is taken to the Daghshali, and the stamped piece is worked into it. No loom-shawl can, of course, be sold without this stamp; and in order to ascertain that no karkander puts in hand a shawl without first obtaining it, some of the Daghshali Pundits are continually employed in inspecting the different karkanas† throughout the

* The list of prices at the Government kotas, given in the last chapter, renders this apparent.

† A karkhana is a house in which looms for making shawls are set up.

towns and the few villages in which there may happen to be any.

It appears that they are in the habit of demanding and receiving from the karkanders illegal remuneration for their boat-hire, road expenses, &c. which, as their visits are necessarily very frequent, must amount to a considerable sum.

At the end of each year the amount paid into the Daghshali by each karkander is calculated by the officials of that office, and compared with the amount he would have paid had the tax of Rs. 47-8 per shawl-baf been taken from him instead.

The deficiency is then paid by the karkander; it rarely or never happens that he has paid percentage in excess, because he entertains a doubt (not, I suppose, unfounded) that in the event of his having done so, the difference would not be refunded to him by the Darogha. He restricts himself therefore to the making of such number of shawls the tax upon which will not exceed the amount of the original import of Rs. 47-8 per shawl-baf annually.

That such an arrangement is detrimental to the interests alike of Maharajah, karkander, and shawl-baf, and beneficial only to the officials of the Daghshali, is evident enough. It is not, however, the interest of the Maharajah and the karkander which call for any special consideration, but those of the unfortunate shawl-bafs. In order to understand more fully the situation of that individual, and the principal causes of the wholesale emigration of shawl and sada-bafs to the Punjab, it will be necessary to advert to an occurence which happened at Srinagar in the year 1865. In the spring of that year the Dihwan Kirpa Ram was appointed to succeed Wuzeer Paunoo in the post of Governor of Cashmere.

On his way to take up his appointment, he was met at Benihal by from 1,200 to 1,500 shawl-bafs, who came to complain to him concerning two matters. First, that in consequence of the Government order, no shawl-baf was allowed to purchase more than eight kharwars of Shallee yearly, and that such an amount was insufficient for their support.

Second, that the deduction in the price of Shallee sold to them by Government, which had been ordered by the Maharajah about three years before, should be allowed them in full.

This requires some explanation, which will further illustrate the system of Cashmere Government. Soon after the accession of Gulab Singh, the rupec of the country, called that of Huree Singhis—value 8 annas—was changed by him for the present chilkee coin, value 10 annas.

All taxes, however, remained at the same amount of rupees. Thus the karkander's tax of Rs. 47-8 Hurree Singh's was changed to Rs. 47-8 Chilkee rupees : necessarily the prices of everything rose in proportion, and the shawl-bafs about six years ago,* most reasonably requested that for such amount of work as formerly entitled them to a Hurree Singhi rupee, they should now receive a chilkee rupee. They preferred their request to the Maharajah, whe decided that half of the difference between the old and the new coin should be paid by the karkander, and half by the Government to the shawl-bafs.

It was further decided that the manner in which this last portion should be liquidated, was to be by a remission of two-and-a-half company's annas in the price of each Kharwar of shallee sold by the Government to the shawl-baf,† that they should pay 28 annas per kharwar, intending to make half an anna on each kharwar for himself.

This, therefore, was the second cause of complaint, for which, after awaiting some three years, the shawl-bafs assembled to petition their new Governer, Kirpa Ram, on his arrival in Cashmere. The answer they received from him was that he would listen to their complaints when he reached Srinagar. When that event took place, he was again waited upon by the shawl-bafs, but they only obtained an answer that he would attend to them in a few days. This process having been repeated two or three times, the shawl-bafs assembled themselves together in a somewhat riotous manner, on the maidan beyond the canal at the back of the city, to consult over their wrongs and

* About twelve years after the change of coin.

† By this arrangement Government did not pay the difference since only eight kharwars were then sold yearly to each shawl-baf. This gives twenty annas yearly from Govt. to each shawl-bef. But computing the wages of a shawl baf at Rs. 4, the difference required by him in a year would be ninety-six annas. Government therefore paid somewhat less than one-third of the difference.

grievances. In bitter and despairing mood they made a wooden bier, such as Mussulmen use to carry their dead to the place of internment, and placing a cloth over it, carried it to and from in procession exclaiming, 'Rajkak is dead, who will give him a grave ?' The house of the individual thus honoured overlooked the maidan, and the whole proceeding was apparent enough to him. He went to the Governor, Kirpa Ram, who gave him some 300 to 500 sepoys with whom he proceeded to the maidan. The shawl-bafs fled at the approach of an armed force, and in the crowding and hurry of their flight some five or six were drowned in the waters of the canal. The affair was reported to Jamoo but no enquiries appear to have been made at the time. About a month and a half afterwards, Rajkak did really die—with unenviable feelings, one cao fancy—and the shawl-bafs were left to purchase their rice at the reduced rates in peace. The restriction as to quantity, however, ramained unchanged, until by the decree of the 1st December 1867, the boon of permission to purchase eleven kharwars of shallee yearly was granted to the family of each shawl-baf.*

The manner of selling the shallee to the shawl-bafs is as follows :- On the arrival of the grain in Srinagar, a large amount is set aside for the shawl-bafs, and portions of it are from time to time made over to the Darogha for them. When that official receives an order for so much shallee from the Governor, he takes his accounts, and writes orders for each of the karkanders, entitling them to receive so much rice, according to the number of men in their employ, from certain specified boats. The karkander, on receipt of the order, sends for the boat or boats named, and distributes the rice to his shawl-bafs, keeping an accouut of the amount delivered to each to be deducted from his monthly wages, the karkander being himself charged with the total cost of the rice in his account with the Darogha.

Such was the way in which the shawl-bafs were allowed to purchase their eight kharwars, and are now allowed to purchase their eleven kharwars yearly. It is unnecessary to point out the endless confusion, mistakes, and corruption which must enter

* Whether the shawl-bafs were actually made to pay eighteen annas, or only ordered to pay it, is an obscure point, upon which I cannot prononce with certainty.

into such an arrangement; and this also is to be noted regarding it, that even now, although a sufficient amount of rice is provided for the use of the shawl-baf in the year, yet, since it is not given in the lump, but in portions from time to time, he may at certain seasons find himself short.

Such was, of course, frequently the case under the eight-kharwar system, when the shawl-baf and his family were often reduced to a state of semi-starvation.*

Unable to obtain rice from his master, the karkander, who had issued all that he had received from the Darogha, he (the shawl-baf,) went to that official to complain that his rice was temporarily withheld.

The Darogha sent for the karkander, who produced his accounts, showing that he had distributed all the rice he had received, and the Darogha having also expended all that date, the unfortunate shawl-baf was, of course, told to go about his business.

By the Maharaja's proclamation of the 1st December, 1867, 'that court for the shawl-bafs has been appointed, under the title of tne Darogha-i–shal-Darg,' the Darogha always had power to punish shawl-bafs, and to adjust their complaints, so far as the Government system permitted him, and some 50 sepoys are always present during the day at the Daghashali for the execution of his orders. The only difference now is, that another official is to hold Cutcherry in the Daghshali, and attend to complaints. He is, however, in a position inferior to that of the Darogha, and therefore (in an Eastern Government) subservient to him and moreover, since the complaints of the shawl-bafs are always either of scant supply of rice, or small payment of wages, the imposibility of any adjustment is evident enough.

The most detestable piece of oppression committed against the shawl-bafs is, however, this—that none of them are permitted to relinquish their employment without finding a substitute, which of course, it is almost always impossible to do.

The shawl-baf may become half blind, as many of them do from thc nature of the work; he may contract other diseases which

* The same evils may happen now under the eleven kharwar system, since the whole amount cannot possibly be supplied to the Darogha, and consequently not to the shawl-bafs, at one time,

the sedentary life and the foetid atmosphere of the low rooms engender and ripen; he may long to take up some other employment, which will permit him to breathe the fresh air, to recruit the unstrung nerves, the cramped sinews, and the weakened frame; and to prolong the boon of existence, which the fearful toil of the loom is hurrying to its close ! Nothing but death can release him from his bodage, since the discharge of a shawl-baf would reduce the Maharaja's revenue by 36 chilkees a year.

It is not strange, that the Government of India should have the power to remove by a word these miseries and sufferings, and will not say it ?

Do those who in power ever spend a thought upon the people whom their predecessors sold into slavery ?

Do they ever picture to themselves those low-roomed, ill-ventilated abodes, where the loom-workers sit at their forced* labour, day after day, toiling for their miserable pittance ?

Those fairly-coloured thread of wool are not the only ones which these looms weave to their eompletion. Threads of life, more costly than those of the softest 'poshm', whose price will be demanded by Heaven yet, are spun out there on the loom of sickness and suffering.

Death or flight are the only doors of release open to the heavy-laden shawl-bafs; and thus we have arrived at an understanding of the causes which have produced those extensive emigrations of the Cashmere shawl-bafs to the Punjab. But the latter alternative is only possible to a man in tolerable health and strength, since the difficulties to be encountered, including the guarded outlets of the valley, are many and great. Many of the fugitives make their way over remote and difficult mountain passes, others by temporarily attaching themselves to an Englishman's camp—one way or another they contrive to reach the Punjab in considerable numbers, and find, in exile, a refuge from the Maharajah's officials of the Daghshali. Is it not almost incredible, that the Government of India has only to say a word to restore these unhappy being, to their homes, and happiness and comfort to hundreds and thousands of suffering families throughout Cashmere, and will not say it ?

* That is; forced' in many instances; of course they do not all want to give up it.

Consider the half-despairing feeling of one of those refugee shawl-bafs, as he prepares to fly like a hunted felon from his wife and children, for to take them with him is, of course, an impossibility ! How many a miserable hour must he have known, debating with himself whether or not to take the final step ! Consider what must have been undergone, in most cases, before he can bring himself to leave the dear ones of him home with the uncertainty of ever again beholding them !

A difficult and dangerous path before him, the possibility of capture and imprisonment, the uncertainty of what he shall meet with in that unknown land which he has heard of by the name of the Punjab which they tell him the 'sahibs' rule over, and do not suffer the poor to be oppressed ! The journey across the mountains is, indeed, easy enough for an Englishman, with his camp and all its comforts and appliances but what is it for one of these unfriended outcasts, with scant supply of clothing, food, shelter, and the dread of capture and punishment continually before his eyes ?

The English traveller, as he pauses on his pleasant journey towards Cashmere, and looks up at the bright snow-clad summits towering above him, and perhaps thanks God—if he have any gift that way—for making this earth so beautiful needs not that other aspect of the world, which the pale, worn figure hastening past him might reveal. He flies like a hunted felon, as I said, and his crime is poverty !

Of these fugitives I have learnt that they are in the habit of sending supplies of money to their families, as occasion offers, by some trader or other returning to the valley; and I am told that the confidence thus placed is never abused. Surely this one fact speaks volumes in favour of the Cashmere character* in regard to those two qualities which they certainly exhibit in a marked degree (considering that they are an Asiatic race)-namely, honesty and loving kindness.

I never yet heard of an Englishman having had anything stolen by a Cashmeerie, and have very rarely heard of theft among

* The people of Cashmere are unjustly abused by interested people, who support the Jamoo Government, and also by travellers whose knowledge of them is limited to boatmen, shikaries, and other with whom the English visitor ordinarily comes in contact.

themselves. In their villages, anyone who may have become incapacitated from old age or sickess. and who has no near relations to look after him, is supported by the community. In the cities, especially in Srinagar, food and money are given to all of the poor who may come to ask for them from the houses of those who are tolerably well off, on the 11th of every month,* as well as on all their sacred days, and especially on the occasion of the Ede, and throughout the month Ramadan. It were easy for me to multiply instances of this and other traits in their character worthy of admiration, but these pleasanter aspects of Cashmere are somewhat foreign to our immediate purpose, nor have I at present time to speak of them. To return therefore :

The family of a refugee shawl-baf is by no means left in peace ; for, according to Hindoo ideas of justice, infraction of the law by any member of the community implicates all his relations. The karkander, of course, immediately informs the Darogha, in order that his tax may be decreased.†

The Darogha sends a sepoy to the house of the fugitive, and wife or mother or father, or probably all of them are brought up before the Daghshali.

They are fined a rupee or two, or suffer a few days imprisonment, by the Goverdment, whose cruelty and injustice have driven from them, in some cases, their almost only means of support.

Such is the case of those who fly from the valley. But how many are there who would fain fly and cannot, who are driven to their unhealthy, and sometimes fatal, labour in the karkhana by the sepoys of the Daghshali !

** ** **

Such is the loom system, and the misery which it produces. The obvious remedy for most of its evils would be the abolition

* This custem is in remembrance of their prophet, Disghyr, whose shrine is in the environs of the city, near the Bagh-i-Dilawur-Khan and is probably one which those who thoughtlessly abuse the Cashmere people are entirely ignorant of.

† Which is not done, however until the end of the year, even in case of death. Thus, if a shawl-baf dies in the first months of the year, the karkander pays tax for eleven months for a dead man : and when the name of the defunct is at last erased from the Daghshali list, the efficials of that admirable institution make the karkander pay a fee to them in honour of the occasion !

of the Daghshali, and the institution of a triennial census of the shawl-bafs, showing how many were at that time employed by each karkander. The tax, which ought to be lowered to 25 to 30 chilkee rupees on eaeh shawl-baf annually, should be collected in advance, by which arrangement the karkhander would be enabled to increase the number of his workmen for three years, without an increase of tax (the Government at the same time reaping the corresponding benefit of sustaining no loss by a possible decrease in the number of workmen). At the end of the first three years, the lessors would probably show an increase in the total number of shawl-bafs, and in the course of six or nine years, the Government revenue from the loom-shawl tax would most likely be larger than it is now; and, what is of more importance, the karkhander would be enabled, and should be compelled, to raise the present wages of his shawl-bafs to 10 to 12 chilkee rupees a month, thereby enabling them to live in their native country in very tolerable comforts, provided that the law of forced labour was abolished, and a reasonable money tax, instead of produce, taken from the zemindars.*

As the matter stands at present, the condition of the shawl-baf has only been bettered to the extent of 5 chilkee rupees a year, by the remissions of the Ist December, 1867.

It now remain for us to examine :—

THE HANDWORK SHAWL SYSTEM : A sada-baf is the workman who makes the plain pushmina from the spun pushm, upon which the coloured threads are afterwards worked with needles by the workman who is called a 'refoogar'. The sada-bafs are immediately under the Darogha of the Daghshali, and in that office a register of their names is always kept; for, like the shawl-bafs, they are neither allowed to leave the valley nor relinquish their employment. The sada-bafs buy the pashm themselves from the bazaars, and manufacture pushmina usually in their own house, sometimes employing an agent to sell it for them to the merchants and others. No Pushmina can, of

* It is unnecessary to point out the facilities for evasion of the tax as it at present collected, by collusion between the Darogha and the karkander, which would be in a great measure remvoed by the institution of a triennial census.

course, be sold by them without the Daghshali stamps, the tax on which is levied at the rate of 10 chilkee rupees for 4 yards of pushmina. Pundits are employed similarly to those who visit the karkhanas, to ascertain that no pushmina is sold by sada-bafs without having paid the above tax. It is said that their visits are dreaded by the sada-bafs, since the pundits oblige them to pay a sort of black-mail, under pretence of boat-hire, road expenses, &c.

When plain pushmina is brought from a sada-baf for the purpose of having a pattern worked upon it or of being dyed, it must be again taken to the Dhagshali, where the first stamp is washed out, and a paper given by the owner, in which the intended ground colour is named ; as soon as it is dyed, it must be again taken to the Daghshali, a second stamp is affixed, and a second tax of 18 chilkee rupees is levied upon the same 4 yds. The shawl work may then be completed upon it; when finished, it is taken for a fourth time to the Daghshali, when the owner receives a certificate that the tax has been paid, which he is bound to give to the purchaser of the shawl, who is required to produce it at custom-houses through which it may have to pass on its way to the Punjab or elsewhere.

The amount paid by a rufoogar or other to a sada-baf for a piece of plain pushmina is one Chilkee rupee per yard, in addition to the market value of the Daghahali stamp.

A yard cannot be made under from two to four days; the position, therefore, of the sada-baf is but slightly better than that of his brother of the loom, but he is not allowed to leave the valley or relinquish his trade.

The circumstances of the refoogar are tolerably comfortable, nor is he in the same state of serfdom as the shawl and the sada-baf, being permitted the privilege of changing up his trade, should he wish to do so.

IV

A large number of troops being usually kept in the countries of Gilgit and Astor, supplies of rice, etc., are sent up in the autumn of every year from Cashmere for their use. Zemindars are pressed from every part of the Cashmere to carry these supplies. They are collected by the different Kardars from the villages under their respective control, where a kind of register is kept, that each house may furnish its quota of men in turn. Those who are thus collected are paid from 4 to 7 chilkee rupees for the double journey by their Kardar and sent by him in charge of a Hurkara to Bandipoor, where there is a sort of depot presided over by a Hindoo official. From him they receive their loads, with a memorandum of the amount which they have to deliver to the Governor of Astor, and from him they bring back a receipt to be presented to the official at Bandipoor. Now, since the full amount that an ordinary man can carry is given to the zemindar, and since little or nothing can be purchased on the road, it is obvious that he must either eat part of his load or starve.

Nevertheless, on his return to Bandipoor, the quantity thus rendered deficient, as shown by the receipt, is taken from the zemindar in money !* The journey from Bandipoor to Astor, for a laden man, occupies twelve days. Such is the ordinary system in time of peace; and if this were all, it would not perhaps, considering the far greater evils than inadequate payment† for

* I believe, however, that it is now usual to send the supplies by the Zemindars only as far as Gurais, from whence they are transported on ponies. What the payment is on this arrangement I do not know. In proportion, I suppose, to what is, or recently was, the payment of a zemindar for the whole distance.

† Grossly inadequate, certainly. A zemindar will ordinarily have three days journey from his village to Bandipoor, twelve days to Astor, where he will be delayed for a few days, he will also be delayed at Bandipoor, as well going as returning; therefore the double journey from his village to Astor and back cannot take less than fifty days. For this the zemindar receives from four to seven chilkee rupees. Now, when an English traveller takes zamindars into the mountain to act as coollies (not as shikaries who are paid a higher rate) he usually gives them six Company's rupees a month and russud, or eight without russud. The sepoys in Astor appear to be under no control, and ill-treat the people of the country as much as they please. When I was

the work that disgrace the Government of the country, be scracely worth writing about. But when some of the frequent disturbances in Gilgit necessitate an increased number of troops, the Cashmeerie zemindars, and others, have to suffer worse evils than a month or two of bad and ill-paid labour.

The last occasion was in 1866. In the summer of that year, it was supposed to be necessary to send up an unusual number of troops, and zeminders, boatman and even tradesmen of the city were pressed to carry their supplies and baggage. They were sent off in a hurry, without the slightest provision being made for thelr lodging, clothing, or subsistence on the road, beyond their allowance of one seer of rice a day for their food and payment.

It is commonly reported that numbers of them died on that occasion; many of them did certainly die during that year on the Gilgit road, engaged in carrying Government stores, and from the causes I have mentioned, namely, want of food, shelter and clothing; but I believe that the actual time was somewhat latter. After those who had been sent with the troops had returned to Casbmere, it was found necessary to send further supplies, it having been then determined to keep the increased number (f troops there throughout the winter.

Accordingly, late in the autumn of 1886, the supplies were sent on the backs of zemindars, taken from their villages in the manner I have described; and many of those men died on the road from cold, exhaustion and want of food.*

I have elsewhere taken occasion to notice this truly Hindoo-

in that district in October, 1867, I found a sepoy abusing an old man, and trying to take something from him—his shoes, It think. I called the sepoy, but he would not come; he retreated to the guard house of the village, where were some other sepoys, into which I pursued him, and brought him to my tent, where I bound him with ropes and made him sit as a prisoner, without his tulwar for some time.

I mentioo this little incident in order to remind those who feel scandalised at hearing of Englishmen in Cashmere who act 'contrary to law,' that throughout the dominions of the Jammu Government there is properly speaking no law !

* 'What of food', although they carried rice an their backs, since, in the absence of fuel, and consequently of beiling water, rice is not available for food.

like act of barbarity, but was then under the impression that the men died during the summer, when sent with the troops to Gilgit. I did not then know that the zemindars had been again sent late in the autumn, at which time it appears that the deaths occured from the causes I have mentioned. The inhumanity of the authorities only appears more glaring from the fact of their having seen men without any equipment, as long a road like that from Cashmere to Astor, at such a season of the year. It was necessary, no doubt, to supply the troops; but if the Government arrangements were so extremely bad, that no provision had been made beforehand in a place where there is always the possibility of an increased demand for troops, and adequate amount of equipment clothing, and arrangement for the shelter of those who were sent up with the supplies, should have been made. But nothing of the kind was done; the men were sent of over the passes with the heavy loads, and many of them perished as I have said.

A Hindoo-like act of barbarity I have called it, since it proceeded not so much from active as from a passive carelessness to human suffering; a dull, stupid indifference like that with which the driver of a bullock waggon in Hindostan urges on his starved and yoke-galled beast, with blows and foul language, until the miserahle brute falls dead on the road.* I have travelled that road, from Astor to Cashmere, and can testify† that it is one of the worst of the mountain paths which lead out of Cashmere into the interior, both on account of the steepness and height of the passes, and still more from the scarcity of villages, and the unwillingness of the inhabiitants to sell snpplies of any kind.

I crossed the Kumori pass, which leads from the Gurais into the Astor Valley, in October, 1867. It was covered with snow for many miles on the Gurais side, and for two days

* The state in which bullocks, donkeys, and dak-gharry horses are frequently seen on the public roads of Hindostan, is a disgrace to the Government of India. Their awners, would be punished in England; why are they permitted to escape in India. The state of the last ought to be well-known to the present viceroy, who patronises that mode of Canveyance in his annual journeys between Simla and Calcutta.

† There are indeed two roads from Gurais to Astor, but I want told that the one I did not see was the worst of the two; of course I do not know which the zemindars book.

journey on the Astor side. I saw no human habitation for at least three days in crossing from one valley to the other, and no shelter of any kind.* I myself, with servants, coolie tents, &c. and the advantage of fine weather, had some difficulty in the pass. We were shelterless by twilight in the middle of the snow at a great elevation, and only succeeded in reaching a spot where tents could be pitched, by observing a part of the mountain side which we could descend repidly, and thus reached a spot of ground free from snow as darkness came on.

Some troops had crosed a few days before me and the number of dead tatoos by the side of the track bore witness to the difficulty they had encountered.

But it was in the month of November that these zemindars were sent up to Gilgit, where the pass must have been considerably worse, and they were sent without the slightest provision for their shelter, clothing or food beyond the loads of rice which they carried on their backs. How many died, it is of course impossible to say! What Hindoo Government would ever think of recording the names or numbers of those who had died in their service.

Picture to yourself, oh reader, those desolate scenes where the Cashmere zemindars had to lay down their lives! None save those who have seen such can fully realise their horrors. No imagination is powerful enough to realise them; the waste, hopeless aspect of the unbounded stretch of snow, the intensely keen blast of the wind, which strikes you with the force of an eagle's wing as it sweeps down upon you through the ravines; above ands around you are snowy peaks and summits, and precipitous slopes of rock, upon whose edge sits the avalanche waiting for his prey.

Through such scenes, heavily laden, the zemindars take their way. Powerful aud hardy are the sons of Cashmere; patiently they toil onwards through the drifting snow, in the name of Allah and his prophet! Many encourage each other with the words of hope : it may be that they will yet reach the other side in safety. Alas, no! From two or three the strength is already

* Except than when I crossed there were the remains of a few wigwars put up by troops, who had passed three or four days before, and which would be destroyed by the first storm.

departing, and the keen wind is paralysing the sinews.

Slowly the conviction fastens upon them that they shall never quit those frightful soltitudes, never see again their homes, nor those who dwelt there waiting their return, fai off in the sunny vale of Cashmere !
Who are realise such thoughts-such moment ?

* * * *

Let us leave the scene of death. But oh, British reader ! Forget not that these and other frightful miseries are produced by a Government whose chief is a feadatory of the British crown; by a Government which derives its permanance from the protection of the British rule; by a Government which the British power forced upon the people of Cashmere; by a Government into whose hands British statesmen sold the people of Cashmere; by a Government therefore, whose existence is disgrace to the British name ! It is at once a memorial of that foul act when, like the arch traitor of old, we bartered innocent lives, which fate placed in our hands, for few pieces of silver.

And it is a standing witness that we accept that act of the past, now that its consequences have been seen, and take the burden of its responsibility upon outselves.

V

The punishment for killing a cow used formerly to be death; but, on account, I believe, of the remonstrances of the British Government, it was changed to imprisonment for life. The method, however, of carrying out the mitigated sentence renders it scarcely more merciful than the capital penalty.

The Hindoo vengence does not only fall upon the actual cow-killer himself, but on the whole of his family; and all who in any way participated, in, or were cognizant of the dead, are imprisoned with him also, I believe, for life !

In addition to this, after each day's investigation into the circumstances of the so-called crime, they are cruelly flogged, and when consigned to prison, are branded and tortured with

hot irons. Insufficient food and general cruel treatment hasten their deaths, before which there has been, I believe, no instance of anyone connected with the slaughter of a cow having been released. But no formal sentence is pronounced in any case when imprisonment is awarded, whether for small offences or great ones.

The offender is sent to prison, and neither he nor any one else knows how long he may be kəpt there. Possibly there are many who have been forgotten. *

Of justice, there is, in fact, little or none. Offences against the Government or against Hindoos are punished with undue severity, while offences perpetrated by Hindoos or Go vernment officials are either passed over, or adjudicated with partiality and injustice. There has, indeed, been recently established in Srinagar a new court for the trial of petty offences and misdemeanours, consisting of five Suni Mussulmen, two Shias, and three Pundits: this seems a fair distribution of religious bias. But their powers only extend to about ten chilkee rupees' fine, nor does their court in any way interfere with the power of the Chief Magistrate to imprison whosoever, he pleases, for any cause or no cause !†

Before the advent of English visitors this year (1868) a number of prisoners were, I believe, sent in batches from the Srinagar gaols to Jamoo, lest the number of prisoners, and the causes of their punishment, shonld be ascertained and commented upon by the European community. This, however, I cannot vouch for, although I believe it to be perfectly true.

The system of the city police resembles that of the land-tax system, in the number of different grades of officials, and consequent facilities for bribery and intimidation which it affords. There is a policeman Mylendar—told off to every 20 to 30 houses; his business is not only to keep order, but to report to his Zillan dar all that goes on. The Zilladar is a sort of constable, having 20 or 30 Myledars under him; he reports to the sub-kotwal, the sub-kotwal to the head Kotwal, and the last-named functionary

* All the offenders are, I am told, subjected to terture, but the actual delinquent more severely than the others.

† An insolvent debor is usually handed over by the court to the creditor to serve as a slave.

to the Chief Magistrate. If the subordinates bring a false accusation against a family or an individual, the latter will sometimes escape punishment; but their accusers are unpunished for the crime of false accusation,

The tax on the sale of land is enormously high, being 4 ann as in the rupee (!) exlusive of the necessary douceur to the clerks, who are, of course, pundits· A marriage licence costs three rupees, and about a rupee more is taken by the pundits;and in the case of a second or third marriage, in the case of the first wife or wives being alive, great difficulties are thrown in the way of the Mussnlman by these officials, unless they are properly bribed, since it appears that their opinion as to the advisability of permitting a second marriage is consulted in many cases by the Magistrate. Sometimes the license is refused unless payment of Rs. 100 or more is made.* In short, in this, as in most other matters, there is no law but the will of the Magistrate.

* * * *

All classes of the Mussulman community are tax-payers except the tailors. Even the boatman, whose pay is only company's Rs. 2--8 a month, is taxed !'Perhaps the poorest and worst off of all, except some of the shawl-bafs. are a class of people who live along the shores of the Anchar lake, not far from the city. They subsist on the sale of what they can procure from the lake, consisting of a coarse kind of grass for cattle, reeds which they weave into matting, and fish, which by a very recent order they are permitted to catch and sell.

For the privillege of thus making use of the lake, they pay a considerable yearly tax to Government. It was impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty what the amount was; but that they are in a state of extreme wretchedness and poverty and that the Government takes a considerable sum of money from them annually, is certainly true. I went into some of the cottages, and found them in as miserably a condition as the appearance of the people outside betokened--windowless, fireless, lightless, and bare!

* I only refrain from giving special instances for fear of the consequances to which the sufferers might be exposed. "that is, to the pundits. It is commonly reported that the present magistrate, Dhiwan Budrinath, is above taing tribes.

Some children and others were shown to me suffering from different diseases. I gave them what I could, and told them to come to my house in Srinagar, and that I would take them to a hospital. They never came; they seem quite hopeless and unable to believe that anyone would ever do anything for them, Their food is only rice, and the course vegetables they produce in their lake gardens; and the only fuel they can procure is dried horse dung! And these people pay taxes.

There is no lack of fuel in this country. All round the shores of the wular lake, magnificent forests of deodar are flourishining in luxuriant strength and beauty, but the heavy duties on wood, as on all other things which are brought into the city or its precincts, render the poorer classes utterly unable to obtain it.

And now before closing this long list of miseries and atrocities, there is yet one other misery and atrocity, and one other iniquitous source from whence the Jammo Government derives its revenue, which I shall present for the consideration of the reader.

The sale of young girls in Cashmere to established houses of ill-fame, is both protected and encourged by the Government, and helps to swell that part of his revenue which the Maharajah derives from the wages of prostitution. The license granting permission to purchase a girl for this purpose costs about 100 chilkee rupees, and an additional payment is, I believe, made to Government when the unfortunate victim enters upon her miserable career. The very fact that such sales take place is due to the grasping and avaricious nature of the Government, since none but the very poorest and lowest classes of the people ever sell their children.*

It is with a Government as with an individual;one crime stands not alone but it is the fruitful parent of a hundred more. Sale of children is a consequence of poverty which is produced,

* The only class of people who sell their children are certain of the villagers, who are shoe-makers and workers in leather. The other Mussulmen of Cashmere consider them to be a low and degraded race, and will not eat with them. I once asked, what could iduce the woman to sell her child' and was anwered, 'poverty.' But no Mussulman of any other class would do such a thing; he would rather starve !

first, by extreme taxation; and second, by the high prices of all kinds of food, which is caused by the Government system of taking the land produce into their own store-houses.

Those who have been bought as I have described, cannot ever quit that life should they desire to do so, since they cannot, of course, raise money to repay to their purchaser either the price paid for them or the license tax to Government.

It is not many years ago since others, who had not been bought, were, nevertheless, prohibited by Government from relinquishing their fearful calling, and were refused permission to marry, for the same reason as the shawl-bafs are still prevented from turning to other employment, namely the loss of the high taxes* which these two unfortunate classes of the people pay to Government.

I will offer no word of comment upon these things; the facts speak eloquently enough for themselves. If they fail to arouse pity and indignation and horror in the hearts of English readers, that class of people must have changed their nature since I left the civilised world eighteen months ago to travel in the Himalayas.

VI

At the present time we are all indulging in a harmless, but not very dignified species of self-glorification about the Abyasinian war. The press is full of laudatory notices of England's conduct on this great occasion; we read of 'pure and

* Some of the nautch girls pay 80 and 100 chilkee rupees a year. I am told that these 'unfortunate females' are now permitted to marry, and turn to a better and a happier life if they wish to do. But there can be no certainty—scarcely probability—that the Jamoo Government, which continues to derive revenue from the kind of 'sales' I have described, will not withdraw this permission and enforce its former barbarous order.

I know of one instance in which a woman who entreated the Government to be allowed to marry and lead a virtuous life, was refused permission to do so. She attempted to fly with a man she wished to marry, but was prevented or brought back, and is now what she was before. I believe this took place only three years ago, and similar barbarity may again be perpetrated at any moment.

holy motives', of 'disinterested action', 'a righteous struggle for the noblest ends', &c. A good opinion of self is, no doubt, as gratifying to a nation as it is to an individual. Nevertheless one cannot but be rather forcibly reminded of the old proverb that 'self-praise is no praise', and foreign nations who read our numerous self-congratulatory expressions on having for once achieved an unselfish public action, may feel tempted to say that such a course must be somewhat an unusual one with us; since its adoption provokes us to trumpet our own praises to all the four quarters of the globe, in a style that might have described some heroic and unequal struggle of a whole nation in defence of hearth and altar, or of a weak ally to whom her word was pledged. Perhaps no stronger internal evidence than this out-burst of self-laudation for the performance of an act which it would have been simply disgraceful not to have done, could be found to remind us that our character as a nation has sunk from what it was. There was a time, not so very long ago, when we, almost single-handed, resisted the oppressor of Europe, and through the terrible campaign of the Peninsula, gave freely the lives of our best and dearest, that we might at last be able to say to Despotism, 'Thus far, and no further". There was a time when we, first of nations, led the way to the abolition of slavery, and at a loss and sacrifice which was felt in every house in England, we cast away the thing, which we felt to be an evil and a shame, from amongst us.

At that time England was looked up to as the one power whose public actions were based upon other than selfish considerations; she was honoured as the nation who would flinch from no sacrifice and from no danger to fulfil a noble object, or defend sacred cause: and she was then undoubtedly the first of nations in the world. Her voice was first in the councils of Europe; her opinion on all great questions was waited for with eagerness, and heard with reverence. What is her position now? Others better qualified than I may answer that question. But whatever be her position in regard to power, influence, authority, no one can have the hardihood to assert that she has any longer the moral power and dignity that were once accorded her in the days when the 'moral support' of England was something more than an empty sound.

No one can imagine that she retains the character of a generous and high-minded nation, so far as her public conduct is concerned.

Perhaps she does not care whether she retains it or not. But the frantic delight into which she seems to have been thrown by having actually done something which she needed not be ashamed of, would seem to indicate the contrary, and induces me to entertain a faint hope that she still retains a sufficient regard for 'pure and holy motives' to induce her to perform that act of justice and mercy which such motives call upon her to undertake in behalf of the people of Cashmere, whom, in the year 1846, she sold into a slavery but little less oppressive and detestable than that which she abolished from her domains in the West.

That such is the true light in which the question of interference with the Jamoo Government ought to be viewed, it is now my task to show.

Cashmere was sold to Gulab Singh under the following circumstances:—

By the conditions made with the Lahore Durbar, after the first Punjab War, a certain sum of money was demanded by the British Government to defray the expenses of the campaign but the Durbar being unable to refund the full amount, it was resolved to take Cashmere and certain neighbouring hill States in lieu of the deficiency, and to transfer these to Gulab Singh for an equivalent sum, which arrangement presented the further advantages of reducing the power of the Sikhs, and of gaining Gulab Singh as our ally.

In Conningham's History of the Sikhs, there is the following passage;—"As two-thirds of the pecuniary indemnity required from Lahore could not be made good, territory was taken instead of money, and Cashmere and the hill States, from the Beas to the Indus, were cut off from the Punjàb and transferred to Gulab Singh, as a separate sovereign, for a million of pounds sterling. The arrangement was dextrous one, if reference be only to the policy of reducing the power of the Sikhs; but the transaction seems scarcely worthy of the British name and greatness, and the objections become stronger when it is considered that Gulab Singh had agreed to pay 68 lakh of rupees as a fine to his paramount before the war broke out, and that the custom of the East

as well as the West requires the feudatory to aid his lord in foreign war and domestic strife. Gulab Singh ought thus to have paid the deficient million of money as a Lahore subject, instead of being put in possession of Lahore provinces as an independent prince."

Such is the plain historical statement of the outward facts connected with the sale of Cashmere; but there are certain other considerations which give that transaction a peculiarly odious aspect, and render it a dark stain upon the history of the British rule in India. These are:---

First, that in no portion of the treaty made with Gulab Singh was the slightest provision made for the just or humane Government of the people of Cashmere and others, upon whom we forced a Government which they detested.

For purposes entirely selfish, we deliberately sold millions of human beings into the absolute power of one of the meanest, most avaricious, cruel and unprincipled of men that ever sat upon a throne.

Second, that after our expulsion from Cabul, and the murder of Shah Soojah, a Government "proclamation" was issued that Dost Mohamed's accession to the throne was sanctioned by the British Government, because principle and policy alike forbade that power to force a ruler upon a reluctant people.

Five years had not passed when, by the treaty of the 16th March, 1846, we proclaimed the miserable hypocrisy of the statement by which we had vainly sought to hide our weakness when Dost Mohammed regained his rightful kingdom.

It was contrary to our principle to force a ruler upon the wild and turbulent Affghans, to whom any settled Government would have been a blessing, and who would not have suffered any ruler to oppress them with impunity. But Lord Hardinge and Sir Henry Lawrence failed to perceive that there was aught unjustifiable in forcing upon the weak and unresisting people of Cashmere, not a ruler who, like our Afghan puppet, was of the same race, the same religion, the same people those upon whom we sought to impose him, but one of a creed between which and that of Islam the most deeply rooted antipathies exist, rendering any sympathy, or any cordiality, or any sentiment other than disgust and hatred, utterly and for ever, impo-

ssible, between the governing and governed classes.

Nor was it a ruler only whom we forced upon a reluctant people, but the crowd of rapacious and unprincipled ministers, courtiers, hangers-on of every grade who followed the fortunes of Gulab Singh. These, raised like himself from the lowest classes, and invested with the titles of Dihwan, Wuzeer, Tehsildar, &c., descended upon Cashmere like a flock of hungry vultures, and swept away the prosperity and happiness of its people, and their descendants are worthy of their ancestors. The Dihwans, Tehsildars, Thanedars, &c., who rule Cashmere, are, as a rule, avaricious, mean and cruel; wholly untrustworthy, and powerless apparently to conceive of the ideas of truth and justice! Finally, we did not, as in the case of our Affghan interference, force upon Cashmere a ruler who was to govern by our advice, and was bound to attend to our suggestions, but one whom, by the terms of the treaty, we rendered irresponsible for any outrage or injustice he or his ministers might choose to commit, with regard to the internal administration of the country.

The third consideration which makes the sale of Cashmere yet more iniquitous, is the character of the man into whose absolute power we sold the people of that country,

In support of the terms I have previously used in describing the nature of Gulab Singh, I shall quote the following passage from Mr, Lepel Griffin's 'Punjab Chiefs', an official work compiled and published by order of the Punjab Government.

"There are perhaps no characters in history more repulsive than Rajahs Gulab Singh and Dayan Singh. Their splendid talents, and their undoubted bravery, count as nothing in the presence of their atrocious cruelty, their avarice, their treachery, and their unscrupulous ambition."

"The history of the siege of Lahore is too well-known to be repeated here. For seven days the garrison held out bravely against the whole Sikh army, which lost in the assault a great number of men, and it was not till Rajah Dayan Singh returned from Jamoo that negotiations were opened, by which Sher Singh ascended the throne and Rani Chand Kaur resigned her claim."

"Gulab Singh, laughing in his sleeves at the success of his and his brother's plans, marched off to Jamoo amidst the curses of the Sikh army, carrying with him a great part of the treasure,

principally jewels, which Maharajah Runjit Singh had stored in the fort, and which plunder, five years later, helped to purchase Cashmere!"

After the investment of Gulab Singh as Maharajah at Amritsar, he sent some regiments to take possession of Srinagar, and to take over the forts, &c. from Shaikh Imam-ud-Deen. Whether the Sheikh had received information from the Lahore Durbar regarding the change of masters which Cashmere had suffered, it is impossible to say ; at all events he refused to admit Gulab Singh's forces into the city, or to acknowledge their master as having any authority in Cashmere. Upon the refusal of the Dogras to quit the valley, the gallant Sheikh sallied forth at the head of his troops, and an engagement was fought at the back of the Hurree Singh Bagh, in which the Dogras were completely routed, and one or two leaders of note were killed.* A large number of prisoners were taken to whom, the Cashmeeries say, the Sheikh gave money and clothing to enable them to reach the Punjab, and that in a few days' time there was not a single Dogra left in the valley.† When news of this event reached Gulab Singh, he applied to the British Government for assistance to enable him to take possession of his new kingdom, and an order was sent to the Sheikh, requiring him yield obedience to the new sovereign of Cashmere, or to consider himself as an enemy of the British power.

The Sheikh wisely chose the former alternative, and Gulab Singh's troops were permitted to occupy Srinagar in peace.

From that period, as I have shown in Chapters I and II, the misfortunes and miseries of Cashmere commenced. The change of coin. the increased taxation, the increased prices, the shutting up of the kotas, the mismanagement and oppression of the Dagshali, the restrictions in the amount of rice purchasable yearly by shawl-bafs, the consequent diminution in their numher, the consequent order that no shawl or sada-baf might leave either his employment or the Cashmere valley, and similar orders regarding the nautch girls.

* One of these was the Wuzeer Sukput; he was buried where the fakeer'e house stands, half way down the long ravine; and the fakeer receives, I believe, a handsome allowance to say prayers over the grave.

† Except a few who remained shut up in the fort, where they had taken refuge.

All these miseries and atrocities date from the commencement of the iniquitous reign of Gulab Singh.

The Sheikh Imaum-ud-Deen was a Mussulman, and had been, I am told, appointed Governor of Cashmere by Sher Singh. Under his rule the country was well and justly governed. The shawl-bafs and other classes were allowed to purchase as much rice as they required, nor were any of the people hindered from leaving the valley*. From his beneficient Government we took Cashmere, and plunged it into all the miseries which it has since suffered.

The Cashmeeries, in speaking of these things, do not seem animated with any unjust or undue feeling against the Maharaja himself; and in speaking of the misfortunes of their country, the well-informed amongst them always date their origin from the alteration of the old coin by Gulab Singh.

The manner in which that was carried out paved the way for all the oppression of which I have given an account. That, they always say, was the beginning of evils. Still less are they inclined to blame the present Maharajah for the evil administration under which they suffer; nor do I, except as far as the ignorance of a ruler regarding the people under him involves a neglect of sacred duties and responsibilities amounting to guilt. The immediate criminality rests with the executive officers throughout Cashmere and its dependent states, but I believe, in a much higher degree with the ministers who are located at Jamoo.

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Let us pause there for a moment to review our position. I have, I think, conclusively shown that the cry of oppression in Cashmere, so far from being nonsensical, as was falsely declared by the Calcutta Englishman of 12th February, 1868, has but too good cause for its efforts to obtain a hearing— efforts which would seem to have been hitherto in vain, alike in their appeal to the justice of the British Government, and the humanity of the Anglo-Indian public.

* The Cashmeeries say that the country was then so prosperous that the people of the Punjab used to come up and settle in Cashmere, but now the Cashmeeries are forced to fly to the Punjab.

I have also shown that we deliberately forced upon a more than 'reluctant' people, a despotic Government of the very worst description, at whose head was a ruler of a character held infamous, even by natives of the East.

I have, therefore, I conceive, shown that towards the people of Cashmere we have committed a wanton outrage, a gross injustice, and an act of tyrannical oppression, which violates every humane and honourable sentiment, which is opposed to the whole spirit of modern civilisation, and is in direct opposition to every tenet of the religion wepro fess.

It remains for us to ascertain whether reparation towards those whom we have thus injured be still possible without the committing of any fresh piece of injustice.

That Article IV* of the above treaty has been in more than one instance broken by the Jamoo Government, the following extract from Major Cunningham's 'Ladak' will, I conceive, sufficiently prove:—

"In the autumn of 1846, during the rebellion of Sheikh Imaum-ud-Deen in Cashmere, there was a slight disturbance in Zanskar, which was promptly repressed by the Vizier Basti Ram who is now one of the confidential servants of Maharaja Gulab Singh. Since then the whole country has been quiet, and the passive Thibetans have yielded to a power which they find it unsafe to resist. The neighbouring countries of Gilgit and Chillas have been added to the Maharajah's kingdom; and the same prince whose dominions only twenty years ago were limited to the petty state of Jamoo, now rules on, undisputed master of Cashmere and Western Thibet, from the sources of the Shayok to the head of the Gilgit river."

These are instances in which the Jamoo Government has violated the Treaty of 1846; but there is another of more recent occurrence, and which is not generally known in India, and of which the home authorities must be in total ignorance.

In accordance with Article II of the Treaty, three officers were appointed by the British Government to survey and determine the 'limits of the eastern boundary of the tract transferred to the Maharajah'. These were, Major Cunningham, Lieutenant Strachey and Dr. Thompson. The map, therefore, published by

* See 'Contents folio' for the text of the Treaty.—Ed.

Major Cunninghan with his work on Ladak (to which I have just referred)* may be considered to show correctly, not only the eastern boundary, but the limits of those other portions of the Maharajah's dominions which he helped to survey, as they existed at the time such survey was made.

The north-eastern boundary of the Maharajah's dominion is defined in Major Cunningham's map to be the water-shed of the Kara-Korum range. Even without the authority of that map, I am justified in assuming that to have been the north-eastern boundary of the Jamoo territories, both because it is the natural boundary of the country of Nubra and its northern valley and ravines and because the Kara-Korum has always been considered as the farthest limit of the Ladak district by the Yarkundis, who dwell on the other side. However in 1865, the Jamoo Government despatched a small body of troops across the Kara-Korum, with orders to occupy garrisoned fort there, which was done.

Shah'dula is about three days' journey beyond the Kara-Korum pass. The fort was provisioned and occupied by the Jamoo troops during the summer of 1865 and 1866, the force being withdrawn in the winter on account of the severity of the climate. Towards the end of 1866, the newly established ruler of Yarkund and Kashgar had taken the country of Koten and had further strengthened himself by the expulsion or conciliation of those who were disaffected towards the Government.

It was therefore probably from prudential motives that the Jamoo troops were not sent to re-occupy their new fort in the spring of 1867.

Some time during that year, Yakoob Beg sent a handful of men to Shah'dula, who destroyed the fort and took the supplies and stores with which it was furnished.†

It is true that a Government map has recently been published, which shows the boundary line of the Maharajah's territory in

* Ladak : with notices af the surrounding Country, By Alexander Cunningham, Brevet Jamoo, Bengal Engineers. London 1854, Chapter XII, Page 355.

† The latest account from Yarkund say that the Kooshbegh endeared himself to his subjects by the strict justice of his administration and by abolition of the above market, which was formerly held in the Yarkund bazar. He is said to be engaged in massing his forces at Kashgar, his frontier town, distant about seven marches from Kokand, which is occupied by the Russians.

this direction to lie along the Kara–Kash River, and which consequently includes Shah'dula within the Jamoo dominions; but this map was not published until the end of 1866, whereas the Maharajah's force went to Shah'dula and erected and garrisoned the fort in the spring of 1865, or earlier. The existence of this map, therefore, cannot be pleaded as having given the Jamoo Government any authority for such extention of territory.

The map in question was founded upon a survey made by Mr. Johnson in the year 1865, after the occupation of Shah'dula by the Jamoo garrison, and the boundary line therein laid down is entirely at variance with that shown in the map which accompanies Major Cunningham's work on Ladak, which was published by Government authority in 1954. The title of the map is, "Map of The Punjab Western Himalaya and Adjoining Part of Thibet, from recent Surveys, and based upon the Trigonometrical Survey of India, compiled by order of the Honourable Court of Director of the East India Company, by John Walker, Geographer to the Company."

The fact then remains, that the Treaty of March, 1846 has been in several instances broken by the Jamoo Government, and it, therefore, follows that the British Government is not bound by that Treaty to abstain from that interference with the affairs of Cashmere which the miserable condition of the people, the impediments thrown in the way of traders, the exclusion of English travellers &c., have now for so long demanded.*

It may be pleaded by the supporters of the Maharajah, that the countries of Gilgit, Chilas and Astor were annexed by his

* Not only are English tourists, sportsmen, scientific me-- &c., excluded from the Maharajah's dominions during six months of the year, but English and French traders also, although native traders from the Punjab and elsewhere pass unquestioned. Of course, all the natives of the hill States, and possibly many of the Punjab itself, explain this extraordinary fact by supposing the British Government unable or afraid to demand from the Cashmere Rajah, that which common courtesy would seem to require from him. Is it very improbable that the insolence and outrages of the fronteir tribes have been increased, or in some instances caused, by this mistaken estimate of our position with regard to the Maharaja of Cashmere ?—an estimate which the Government of India does its best to foster, by not only excluding all its servants from the Jamoo dominions during the winter, but by limiting the numbers of those who wish to travel there during the summer.

father many years ago, and that no notice having been taken at the time, it would now be an ungracious act on the part of the British Government to make such infringement of the Treaty a ground for interference. With regard to the matter of the Shah'-dula fort, it may be urged that so slight an aggression into a barren and deserted region can scarcely constitute an infraction of the Treaty sufficient to justify the interference of the British Government with the Maharajah's internal administration

To those and similar considerations the following answers appear to be sufficient:—

First;—That the Jamoo Government has shown itself incapable of just or humane rule.

Second:—That the Jamoo Government has for many years pursued a system of oppression and misrule under the protection and countenance of the British Government.

Third:—That it has consequently become a stigma and a reproach to the British Government, both among the European and native community of India.

Fourth:—That there are no means of rendering the administration of the Jamoo Government consonant with that which should distinguish a power protected by the British Government (see Article IX of the Treaty), except those of active interference.

Fifth:—That the British Government committed an act of gross injustice in forcing the rule of Gulab Singh upon a reluctant people.

Sixth:—That, therefore, to forego the power of making reparation to the people we injured, which the infractions of the Treaty give to the British Government, would be an act of injustice and cruelty scarcely inferior to that which we perpetrated when we sold the people of Cashmere into the slavery of Gulab Singh by the iniquitous Treaty of 1846.

In a word, we cannot exercise generosity towards the Jamoo Government without committing a fresh injustice towards the people to whom we owe reparation.

With regard to the matter of the Shah'dula fort, it should be remembered that, although a slight instance in itself, yet little things have sometimes led to great wars; and that since by Article IX of the Treaty the British Government is to protect the Maharaja against all external enemies, it is obvious that such

little encroachments as that of Shah'dula might plunge us into war with all the Mussulman tribes of Central Asia. The Pall Mall Gazette remarks, without any particular comment ;—"We believe that it has just been ruled that the Maharaja is at liberty to hold whatever foreign relations he may care to entertain without reference to us". Evidently, the Pall Mall Gazette must be totally ignorant of the nature of the Treaty of 1846, since a glance at Article IX will convince any one that, if the Maharajah is permitted to enter into whatever foreign relations he may please to entertain, he may at any time plunge us into a war with Turkistan, or Bokhara, or with Russia herself.

Suppose, for example, that next year the Maharajah were to send a few troops to occupy a portion of the country beyond his Gilgit boundary, and that Russia had conquered Budhukshan, and concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with that country and Bokhara, and that a force subsidised by a few regiments of Cossacks and Kirghings, officered by Russians, was sent to chastise the Jamoo chief for this temerity by annexing to Russia, the Bokhara territory, say only Gilgit and Astor, and the Valley of the Indus so far as to include Skardo, we should have a pretty little mountain campaign cut out for us, with more formidable opponents than the undisciplined robbers of the Hazara, who are now giving us the trouble of beating them. It is possible that, in the event of such a contingency, our home authorities would re-consider their verdict, that the Maharajah has a 'right to entertain that foreign relations he pleases etc., and it may be as well to remember this, that if the Shah'dula affair is not considered of sufficient importance to release us from whatever engagement of non-interference may be implied in Article I of the Treaty, we cannot at any future time plead that any similar act of aggression on the part of the Jamoo Government is a violation of the Treaty and of sufficient importance to release us from our engagements contained in Article IX by which we are bound to protect the Maharajah's Government against all external enemies!

It is to be hoped, however, that our relations with Russia will be those of peace, not war; and that we shall, at no distant period, co-operate with her in spreading the blessings of civilisation and settled Government among oppressed peoples and

savage tribes.* Should such be our happy destiny, the importance of free trade and unrestricted transit (for Englishmen as well as natives) through Ladakh and Cashmere must be evident enough. On this subject, the following extract from a Russian paper called the Golos, of December, 1866, which I have taken from a late number of the Calcutta Review, is interesting and important.

An amicable division between Russia and England is quite practicable. What has not been conquered by one power might, without any opposition, be conquered by the other, more especially as the advantages of such aoquisitions are contested by many.

We even do not see any reason for dissatisfaction in the possibility of our Central Asiatic frontier soon forming the boundary of the Anglo-Indian empire. Such a frontier would, at all events, determine the commercial fields for the disposal of English and Russian production and would considerably weaken, if not altogether remove, all dangerous rivalry, and that the sale under such circumstances of English and Russian productions would rapidly increase, is evident. The chief obstacles to trade in this region are the incessant depredations and rapacious exactions made by petty Asiatic despots.

All these drawbacks must at once disappear under English and Russian rule, and then an interchange of commodities will freely take place.

The expansion of the frontier to a mutual point of contact between English and Russian territory, will not only decrease the chances of collision between Russia and England, but also conduce to amity and a feeling of friendship between those countries, seeing more especially that a conflict between them in such a distant region would be disadvantageous to both, and only lead to mutual losses.

* See M. Vainberg's description of slave life and slave trade in Central Asia, which Russia is already, even amid the difficulties of her first advance among hostile and barbarous nations, treading down beneath her feet.

VII

It is impossible to avoid drawing a mental contrast between the careless indifference with which, on the occasion of the sale of Cashmere, all question of moral right was complacently ignored both by the Government and the public, and the virtuous indignation into which it seems that a large party of the former, and a small proportion of the latter, are thrown at the idea of any transgression of legal right with regard to interference in the affairs of Cashmere.

* * * *

That our failure in imbueing the native of India with any regard for the spirit of Christianity has been almost complete, the conduct of the wealthy landowners of Bengal seems sufficiently to prove. I quote, from the Friend of India of the 20th August, 1868 :—

"No language can be too strong to characterise the selfishness and apathy of the zemindars in the inundated districts to the south of Calcutta, and in Midnapore, as on the occasions of the cyclone of 1864, the Orissa famine of 1866, the Nuddea inundations and the cyclone of 1867, the wealthy landholders of Bengal have been found wanting."

* * * *

There is only one question to be asked and answered, with regard to the work, and that is, "Are the statements herein contained concerning the Jamoo Government true or untrue?" And there is only one method by which that question can be answered, namely, by the course which I have myself pursued—of strict and laborious investigation in Cashmere itself.

Should that be done, as it is my earnest wish that it may be, by a Government Commission, the truth or untruth of the

charges I have brought against the Jamoo Government will be ascertained.

* * * *

Of the futility of the Maharajah's promises, there has been ample proof in the fact that none of these made to Sir Robert Montgomery in 1864, concerning reduction of duties, &c., were kept. The Maharajah affirmed that he had given orders to his officials to carry out the promises, &c., but Dr. Caylay's report from Ladakh, for the season of 1867, showed that no improvement upon the old system had been attempted.

* * * *

The Maharajah is, therefore, unable to control his officers in Ladakh, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that he is likewise unable to control them in Cashmere ! Nay, it is not just to suppose that the Maharajah's officials in all parts of his dominions act systematically in defiance of their Maharajah's orders and wishes—since the Maharajah is represented as of a humane and benevolent disposition, and desirous to promote the well-being of the subjects for whom he feels himself responsible. *

Then, the Maharajah is manifestly unable to carry out his intentions, how thankful he will doubtless feel to the British Government, should they resolve upon furnishing him with the means of protecting his people (for whose welfare he is so laudably anxious) from the rapacity of ministers and officials who must undoubtedly (if the character the Maharajah claims for himself be true) conduct every branch of the administration in a manner diametrically opposed to the wishes of H. H. the Maharajah of Cashmere and Jamoo.

* See the proclamation of the Maharajah of Cashmere, which was published in the Lahore Chronicle of the 28th December, 1867, in which it is said that the good of his subjects, which are the good gifts of the Almighty and the happiness, and supporting the poorer classes, life on his (the Maharajah's) shoulders as a burden.

NOTE

On The Treaty of Amritsar, 1846

The text of the treaty of Amritsar, 1846, between the Brttish Government on the one part, and Maharajah Gulab Singh on the other, was originally included in each of the Parts One, Two and Three. In order to avoid any monotony in repetition the text af the treaty ts included in the Appendix to the editor's detailed introduction, and as such it does not, in this edition, form part of Parts One and Two. But in view of the fact that the treaty is repeatedly refrred to in Part Three, the text has been retained there.

Please see 'contents folio' for the text of the treaty.